

Chapter 6

Operational Responsibility

VI assets are a valuable source of information. This chapter discusses the responsibilities of the commander, operations and plans staff officer, signal staff officer, VI staff officer or noncommissioned officer (NCO), and functional user.

COMMANDER

6-1. The operational commander is responsible for identifying the requirement for VI support, ensuring there is adequate support for VI assets, and determining collection requirements based on local mission objectives. This includes VI operations in all subordinate, assigned, or attached commands. Staff officers assist commanders in the discharge of these duties.

6-2. The commander is the release authority for all imagery acquired in the theater of operations. The complete cycle from acquisition to receipt by the Joint COMCAM Center must occur within 24 hours for the collected imagery to remain a viable decision-making tool for the leaders at the NCA, JCS, and MILDEPS.

OPERATIONS AND PLANS STAFF OFFICER

6-3. The operations and plans staff officer at each level (theater, corps, division, and brigade) is responsible for identifying and integrating VI requirements into the command battlefield information efforts. This integration is critical as it significantly enhances operational decision-making.

SIGNAL STAFF OFFICER

6-4. The signal staff officer at each level of command is responsible for directing VI in support of the assigned mission and advising both the commander and the operations and plans staff officer. He identifies and evaluates VI requirements and directs the preparation of planned operations, crisis, and exercise plans to ensure accomplishment of VI missions. The signal staff officer briefs commanders and staffs on the capabilities and limitations of VI units and procedures for requesting VI support. He is responsible for defining and integrating the role of VI in support of battlefield information systems (BISs) at his command level. The signal officer at each level will have a VI staff officer or NCO to advise them on VI operations.

VI STAFF OFFICER OR NCO

6-5. The VI staff officer or NCO at each command level integrates operationally with the component battle staff and is responsible for assisting the signal staff officer in the planning and execution of VI in support of the assigned mission. He identifies and integrates VI applications to support operational decision-making to prosecute operations at all echelons of command. He defines the capabilities and limitations of VI units and establishes procedures for requesting, validating, and prioritizing VI support. On the ASCC staff, the theater COMCAM VI staff officer in the G6 assumes these duties and responsibilities. At echelons corps and below (ECB), the signal staff officer assumes these duties and is advised and assisted by the VI staff officer or NCO.

FUNCTIONAL USER

6-6. The functional user at each level is responsible for identifying, defining, coordinating, and integrating VI support into the operational decision-making process. Users must familiarize themselves with VI capabilities, limitations, and procedures prior to requesting support. VI capabilities, limitations, and procedures are outlined in local VI SOPs.